YOUTH

BIRTH

843 A pregnant woman, in former times, did not make fun of a deformed person or stare at him, lest her baby have the same defect. She should give offerings to every such person in the neighborhood. She must not let a dog breathe on her or the baby would have fever with hot breath like a dog. She was herself dangerous and must not stand around to look at a war party lest she injure their strength. She must not visit any sick person, even her own mother, for she would cause the invalid's death.

Her husband must not go on a war party for he would have no strength. If he did by chance go, he must not kill or look on a dead enemy or the baby would die a violent death. He must not kill a rabbit, or if he happened to, he must not touch it. The penalty was croup for the baby. If he killed a rattlesnake, the penalty was convulsions.

●844 When labor began, the mother retired to the segregation hut, where any female relative might go with her. The relative dug a pit in the floor of the hut and lined it with something soft to receive the baby. She suspended a rope from the roof of the hut and the mother knelt and pulled on it with arms raised until the baby dropped in the pit. If the family was travelling, she sought a secluded place and found an overhanging branch to pull on.

If labor was difficult, the helper might kneel behind her and push down over the abdomen. Sometimes another woman squatted in front of her and helped. At present, when birth sometimes takes place in the house instead of the segregation hut, the husband may be one of the helpers. "Some husbands will kneel behind a wife all day and hold her up" (26). Ordinarily, however, men fear every-
[845] thing connected with birth. If there was much delay, the cause was thought to be a hair from an Apache trophy or from a dead man which had become twisted around the foetus. The shaman was then sent for and, after smoking and singing to find the position of the hair, he sucked it out.

When the baby was born, the umbilical cord was snipped about four inches from the body with a sharp fingernail. The rest of the cord was thrown away or buried. There was no special significance attached to it. The afterbirth was buried by a man, "because a woman could not dig a deep enough hole". Men, however, were ex-

2: Underhill E-5 (1931-1935)1939 NU28 Papago NU28

ceedingly afraid of it and the woman helper wrapped it so that they would not see it. Then they picked it up with sticks and dropped it into the hole. 844

After the birth, mother and child remained in the segregation hut for a month. The mother must eat no salt until the end of the umbilical cord fell off, or the child's navel would get sore. The best food for her was gruel of cactus seeds or mesquite beans, which was thought to make her strong. She must not wash for the whole month or she would have rheumatism. According to one informant, her husband at this time used separate dishes which at other times were kept outside the house (26). The wife in the segregation hut used the same dishes she had at menstruation. 846

"When the moon had come back to the same place", she and the husband and child went through a purification ceremony. They went at dawn to a shaman who made a specialty of this ceremony and of child naming. He drew a circle on the ground and placed the mother in it with her back to the east. She held the child. The father, according to some informants, sat in the circle with her (26), according to others, on a cross marked to the south of the circle (1), or simply on the ground outside. 846 783

The shaman kept a special kind of yellow clay found mostly in Sonora. He scraped a little from the dried ball in which it was kept; mixed it with water and pounded owl's feathers and stirred it with an owl's feather. He "cleansed" the parents by dusting them off with his shaman's plumes. Then, carrying the bowl of clay and singing, he walked back and forth four times, from west to east, toward the mother and the rising sun (26), or around the circle (1). Then he had both parents and child drink from the bowl, the order varying, according to different informants. If the baby would not drink, the shaman drank a little and spat it into the baby's mouth. Then he gave the child a name which had no connection with the parents or their families, but referred to something he had dreamed. Such names were often poetic, as Boiling Wind, Hawk over Water, Dawn Singing. [553]

The woman was now considered cleansed and might go back to the family home with the baby. The shaman was paid a basket or some food.

The omission of the ceremony would make both parents and child sick. An unmarried mother must hold it, but without the father. A divorced woman went through it with the baby, while her husband went through it separately. If a woman went through it with her husband, when he was not the baby's father, the husband might die. [753] [848]

3: Underhill E-5 (1931-1935) 1936
NU28 Papago NU28

I did not know just when the time would be, but I knew that I felt pain when I stooped out of our little door. I said to my husband's aunt: "I think I will go to the Little House. I would not like such a dreadful thing to happen as for me to be caught inside the house in childbirth." "Well, go," she said. This was the first I had said to her or to my mother-in-law either, the whole thing being so new.

There was a gully behind our house and the Little House was on the other side of it. When I reached the near edge of that gully, I thought I had better run. I ran fast; I wanted to do the right thing. But I dropped my first baby in the middle of the gully. My aunt came and snipped the baby's navel string with her long finger nail. Then we went on to the Little House. My sisters-in-law said to me afterward: "Why didn't you tell us? We didn't know you were suffering in there. We heard you laughing." I said: "Well, it wasn't my mouth that hurt. It was my middle."

I stayed in the Little House, for that was what my father had told me to do. "When you have your first baby, don't come into the house. Stay out until the moon comes around again. Then go to the medicine man and be cleansed."

So I stayed alone there for a month, and the family brought me raw food, which I cooked. I ate no salt until the end of the baby's navel string fell off, so his navel would not be sore. Then my husband and I and the baby went to the medicine man, and he gave us all white clay to eat as he had given me when I became a maiden. But he did not give my baby a name. We were modern and I let a priest name him, Bastian.

It was nice in our house. My young brothers-in-law had married and I had their two wives to keep me company. Feather Leaves was one, and Singing Dawn. We girls did the cooking for my mother-in-law and left her to her baskets. At night when we ladled the gruel out of the pot, we all ate two and two, each married couple with one bowl, drinking by turns.

My mother-in-law managed our work. "Come," she would say, "get your carrying baskets. Let us go for food."

So we would go laughing out over the flat land to dig the roots or up in the hills to cut the cholla. I carried my baby in its cradle board on top of the carrying net. While we picked into a smaller basket, I leaned the carrying net against a tree and balanced the baby on top.

Once I was digging roots like that and I got very tired. I made a pile of earth with my digging stick, put my head on it and lay down. In front of me was a hole in the earth made by the rains, and there hung a gray spider, going up and down, up and down, on its long thread. I began to go to sleep and I said to it: "Won't you fall?"

4: Joseph et al · D, E-5 (1942-1943) 1949
NU28 Papago NU28

frain from butchering cattle or going hunting, as they did in the old days. The mother observes certain other taboos: she must not allow dogs to breathe upon her; she must not look directly at the sun; and, according to one informant, she must not stare at or mock a cripple, lest the child be similarly afflicted.[2] Today most parents apparently are not too concerned about these dangers, but if an illness of the child is attributed by the medicine man to some infraction of these rules, the parents readily accept the interpretation. One young father blamed his little son's illness on the fact that, during his wife's pregnancy, he had helped white men test the blood of horses.

The whole household looks forward with joy to the coming of another baby, for children increase the status of the parents, insure the future solidarity and prosperity of the household, and secure the elders against the privations of helpless old age. Although the male is dominant in this Indian group, not much preference is shown for boys; children of either sex are welcomed and treated with equal care. The Papago are aware, however, that one capable woman can manage a large household but that one man cannot handle a farm and herd. Hence the loss of a male child is felt more keenly, as is apparent in such phrases as "and it was a boy too!" There is no evidence that twins are considered undesirable or that one of them is put out of the way. Several sets of living twins are known to the writer, and people speak readily of the death of one of a pair of twins.[3]

BIRTH

The great majority of Papago are born at home. In the western districts, the distance to the Reservation hospital at Sells (sixty-five to one hundred miles), bad roads, and general distrust of white medicine keep most women from going to the hospital. Even the inhabitants of the eastern districts, who are closer to the hospital, do not seem to relish the thought of their babies being delivered by a white man.[4]

In childbirth at home the mother is attended by her own mother if possible; otherwise by her husband's mother or any adult female of the household. The woman in labor kneels and grips a post or is supported by the attendants. If

2. Ruth Underhill, *The Social Organization of the Papago Indians*, p. 156.

3. There is some indication that, if one twin must die, it should preferably be the last-born. A medicine man carves wooden figurines about seven inches high which represent the twins. One figurine is buried with the dead child and the other is kept in the house with the living twin. Each is thus thought to be unaware that his twin is not with him; neither will become lonely for the other and attempt reunion. In the old days, according to Underhill (*ibid.*, p. 158), twins were considered to have magic power.

4. Between 1940 and 1943 three Hickiwan women who had learned English at school went to the hospital, but two did not go until after difficult deliveries at home. In the East, hospital deliveries are more frequent, but they are still only a small fraction of the total.

4: Joseph et al D, E-5 (1942-1943) 1949
NU28 Papago NU28

844 delivery is difficult, a medicine man is called in; he massages the abdomen in an effort to right the child in the womb.

After the delivery the attendants cut the cord and bathe and swaddle the baby in blankets. One of the men of the household buries the afterbirth in a deep hole outside the house.

846 After the birth the mother is not secluded in the menstrual hut as she was in the old days. She rests in bed from four to twelve days, or until she feels strong enough to resume her duties. Her first food following the birth should be a soup of roasted wheat and saguaro seeds. Until the baby has been taken to the medicine man, the mother is to eat no salt and nothing "sweet" or "sour." How strictly these rules are observed today is not known.

BIRTH CEREMONIES

852 Within three or four weeks after the infant's birth, his parents take him to a medicine man for the purification rite. At dawn of the date set by the shaman, which seems to depend on the phases of the moon, he draws a circle on the ground in which he seats mother and baby, and sometimes the father. They face east, as does the medicine man standing in front of them. The first part of his magic ritual is directed toward the rising sun. Then he turns, waves his sacred eagle feathers over the family, and gives each of them a mixture of magic white clay and water to drink. When the medicine man has given the baby a name (see chap. iv), the ceremony is concluded.

This is a simple rite and involves no elaborate preparation. As it is performed in private, only the child, the parents, and the medicine man being present, the villagers are probably unaware of the event at the time. However, it is extremely important that the rite be performed, and it is rarely omitted except by the strictest Presbyterian Papago. By this means the uncleanliness of baby and parents attendant upon birth is removed, and the health of the child and of all his relatives is safeguarded. The child who undergoes the rite will be industrious as well as strong. Even an unmarried mother, against whom feeling was rather bitter in the village because she was carrying on an affair with a married man, brought her baby to the medicine man. The father did not accompany her, but apparently the ceremony was regarded efficacious without him. However, some Papago are beginning to question the validity of the ceremony. One woman told an investigator that the Presbyterian children who had not been taken to the medicine man apparently grew up quite normal and healthy, but she then pointed to some sick children and remarked that "people said" they were not strong because their parents omitted the rite!

Since most Papago profess some Christian faith, the native birth ceremony

7: Lumholtz N-5 (1909-1910)1912
NU28 Papago NU28

586 father of the girl would decide to whip her with a rope of rawhide to bring her to the proper way of thinking.

841 Certain periods of female life are looked upon with awe, even by the civilized Papago. If a hunter touches a woman at these times he will have bad luck or contract some disease. Formerly a girl in this condition could not touch her hair. If she wanted to scratch herself, it would have to be done with a stick, and even her 881 brother could not touch his hair. When the girls come of age, dancing and singing are kept up for many nights in succession in a very fatiguing fashion, as neither rest nor food is taken. No intoxicating drinks are partaken of, and one marvels at the exertions that primitive man finds it necessary to undertake in order that the girl may be started right in life. Formerly these ceremonies, each time lasting four nights, had to be performed on four occasions, and even thus the girl has to go for a few days' [343] seclusion to the *bobólikaki*, a house specially set apart for women considered temporarily impure. The dancing on such occasions consists of a forward and backward rhythmical movement of two rows of men and women facing each other and at the same time slowly moving in a circle. The participants hold each other by the hand, and the movements are in time with the singing, four steps forward and four backward. In Quitovac where the Indians have been much influenced by the Mexicans, although they have given up the dancing part of the performances, the singing is kept up for eight nights or more in succession.

534 881

● 844 When the woman feels that her hour is approaching,

7: Lumholtz N-5 (1909-1910) 1912
NU28 Papago NU28

844 she takes up her abode in the hohólikaki where she remains for over three weeks. She bears her child *accroupie* assisted by her mother or elder sister; sometimes an elderly woman is specially chosen for this, acting as 846 midwife. Formerly, for six days thereafter, the food was [262] made for the mother and brought to her, the diet for the first two days consisting of *atole blanco*, a kind of thin gruel made of maize or sometimes wheat, mixed with the seeds of the sahuaro fruit. Now, in imitation of Mexican custom, the period is extended to twenty days. The husband during this time uses a different gourd from the rest of the family when he drinks water.

553 261 Twenty days after the wife has returned from her seclusion the medicine-man comes to the house to give the baby clay to eat and present it with a name. The clay has the same name, *pit*, as that used in pottery making, and it does not look in anywise different. In the afternoon, after having mixed a small quantity with water and placed the mixture in a sea-shell on the ground, he takes up a position east of it, while the parents, with the infant, stand to the west. He walks four times toward them, the last time hooting low like an owl. The parents have to take the drink first, then the baby. If the child is male, the medicine-man gives it to the mother first; if it is female the father drinks first. In administering the drink to the child, he also gives it a name, which the grandparents previously have agreed upon; with his eagle plumes he makes passes over the infant, and with the same object sprinkles some of the water on its chest, shoulders, and back. The advan-

614 he belonged, but was not forbidden to marry within it. In the same way the whole country was divided into ceremonial halves or moieties known as Buzzard and Coyote. This 46 custom is similar to that of the Mission Indians, distant language relatives of the Papagos. But whereas the moieties of the Mission Indians forbade marriage of one moiety member with another and have given to the moiety many ceremonial duties, the Papagos know Buzzard and Coyote as names only and there are no rules or ceremonies connected with them.

841 Many of the old Papago ceremonies dealing with birth 854 and death are no longer practiced but there are enough 846 old people living so that we can at least have an account of them. A mother, about to give birth to a child, went to a separate hut kept for "dangerous women." Not only women in childbirth but women in their periods came under this heading, for the strange power of reproduction seemed to the Papagos fraught with magic and death. The new mother remained in this segregation hut for a month before she and her baby might emerge. Then the medicine man gave them both a mixture of clay to drink while he pronounced a purification formula.

881 Young children were continually urged to be industrious for this was the supreme Papago virtue. Boys were [571 461] expected to have a dream which would tell them what career to choose and give them power to follow it. Girls usually did not dream but when they reached maturity a special ceremony was held for them. The girls were kept apart from others for four days, then bathed and brought out to dance with the whole village. Sometimes this dance continued every night for a month, and at the end of that time the strange new power which had visited the girl was thought to be tamed. Her parents soon visited the par- 582 ents of an industrious youth and arranged that the two should be mated. There was no marriage ceremony other than the coming of the boy to the girl's house and taking her home with him after four days. They lived with the

484 796 [788] Franciscan missionaries to the earlier date of their own St. Francis of Assisi). The fine old mission church at San Xavier del Bac is the goal of Papago pilgrims at that time. In 1950 about 15% of the Desert People picking cotton who left their jobs made the journey to San Xavier.[1]

541 One secular event in the fall competes with religious celebrations for the interest of the Desert People. This is their tribal rodeo staged at Sells. About 1 of 10 Papago cotton pickers attended one of the two-day 1950 performances.[2] Wage laborers were augmented by great numbers of stay-at-homes, who filled the 2,500-seat capacity stands both days with help of a few hundred Anglo visitors from Tucson and other southern Arizona towns.

166 504 184 844 [158] A few laborers return to the reserves for other reasons---some women go home to their mothers when they are due to parturate, although most seem to bear their babies in labor camps without medical aid. Sometimes a quick trip home is necessary to look after animals or other property. But generally when the Desert People go to labor camps, they go to work steadily through the season. They leave only for---to them---pressing reasons.

796 461 462 [788] [788] Most farmers hiring Indians realize that religious celebrations are very pressing reasons. Obligations the Desert People feel they must fulfill at these times rise above considerations of steady work. The vow to St. Francis comes before some farmer's cotton, or the Papago's own job, and he will go to one of those three churches regardless of other duties. Farmers who realize the importance to the Papagos of their religion are much happier men at fiesta time than those who regard a job as the most important thing in the world.

466 [461] [484] However, many farmers do not understand the religious beliefs of their Papago employees sufficiently to make allowances when Indians ignore prevalent Anglo work standards. And cotton growers resent the inconvenience involved in transporting Papagos. A Marana farmer remarked "One reason I never fool with Papagos is you have to take them to Sells 3 or 4 times a year." Another who hired Papagos griped that "Indians are more

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[1] 3 of 20 trips of known purpose were to San Xavier.
[2] 2 of 20 trips of known purpose were to the rodeo.